



For Capt. Andrea Donalty, chief medical officer (CMO) and general pediatrician at Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command Bremerton, every day is National Women's Physician Day which was officially recognized Feb. 3, 2020. As a pediatrician, Donalty helps support the Navy surgeon general priority on operational readiness and core mission of ensuring force medical readiness and medical force readiness by providing family-centric compassion, competence, and care (Official Navy photo by Douglas H Stutz, NMRTC Bremerton public affairs officer).

I AM NAVY MEDICINE, CAPT. ANDREA DONALTY, CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER AT NMRTC BREMERTON

For Capt. Andrea Donalty, chief medical officer (CMO) and general pediatrician at Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command Bremerton, every day is National Women's Physician Day.

Although Feb. 3, 2020 was the nationally chosen date to recognize female physicians and respect Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman to receive a medical degree in the U.S. in 1949, female physicians such as Donalty are increasingly joining the ranks of doctors of medicine.

"National Women's Physicians Day was first celebrated in 2016 to honor women physicians across the country and the path female doctors have paved since 1849. In 2017, women made up more than half of all students in medical schools for the first time in history. Brave Zulu to the female physicians serving proudly in the U.S. Navy Medical Corps and Navy Medicine Civilian Corps," said Donalty.

Donalty, from Gaithersburg, Md., attended Connelly School of the Holy Child, did her undergrad at The George Washington University 1993, followed by Med School at The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences 1997.

"I became interested in a career in military medicine when I was selected for a high school apprenticeship program at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR) when I was 16 years old. I worked as a laboratory technician, assisting an Army psychiatrist, Army cardiologist, and a civilian exercise physiologist with their research projects. I was drawn to the Navy for the diversity of opportunities that exist on land, on the sea, and in the air. The Navy seemed to have it all," related Donalty.

She has been in the Navy for approximately 22 years, with her career beginning in 1989 as a Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) midshipman on scholarship for college.

"I was commissioned as an ensign in the Navy Reserves, but having received a Health Professions Scholarship, I entered medical school. Upon graduation, I received a commission as a lieutenant," said Donalty, who has been on active duty since 1997.

Her duty stations have included Pediatric Internship at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth (NMCP), 1997-1998, general medical officer tour at Branch Medical Clinic Ingleside, Texas, from 1998 to 2000, pediatric residency at NMCP, 2000-2002, general pediatrician at Naval Hospital Oak Harbor from 2002 to 2008, along with being the department head there from 2003-2008; general pediatrician at U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa and pediatrics department head from 2008 to 2011; general pediatrician and pediatric department head at Naval Hospital Bremerton and Medical Executive Committee chair last two years of tour 2011-2014; general pediatrician at U.S. Naval Hospital Naples and the interim CMO last year and a half from 2014 to 2018; and currently CMO at Naval Hospital Bremerton.

Donalty's most memorable experience was caring for critically ill children in the adult intensive care unit when stationed at Okinawa.

"We were permitted to admit but did not have pediatric subspecialists. We had Tripler Army Medical Center (Hawaii) pediatric intensivists and other pediatric subspecialists on speed dial," related Donalty.

Favorite duty station (so far)?

"U.S. Naval Hospital Naples. The team there was incredible. I learned much about leadership and building relationships to foster a work environment of excellence," Donalty said.

Along with geographic locales, Navy Medicine has taken Donalty to professional heights and personal accomplishments that from the onset seemed incredible.

"I never thought I would have a medical executive position. But my mentors and leaders throughout my career always encouraged me to reach for the next step and try new and challenging assignments. One of my pediatric specialty leaders told me 'you never feel ready for the next step up but you are.' I had his voice

in my head each time I applied for that next position,” said Donalty, holding such positions as department head of pediatrics in three locations – small military treatment facility, largest overseas pediatric department, and teaching hospital pediatrics department – Medical Executive Committee chair, and currently chief medical officer.

Donalty was born to immigrant parents – mother from Germany and father from Liechtenstein – as the second of four children.

“I was born on Long Island but my parents moved to Maryland when I was a year old. My father, a nuclear physicist, took a job with the Navy Research Lab. He later transitioned to work for Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center for many years. I attended Catholic school from first through twelfth grade and as mentioned, became intrigued with what the military had to offer via my apprenticeship at WRAIR. I watched my older sister struggle with college choices due to the family’s lack of finances and investigated Reserve Officers’ Training Corps scholarships as an option to fund my education. While I had offers from all three services, the Navy felt like the best fit. I married my husband Sean when I was an intern and we have four sons, the last of which was born in Okinawa,” Donalty said.

In her current position, the opportunity to help improve patient safety, quality of care, and the experience of staff are highlights of being assigned to NMRTC Bremerton. Being part of Navy Medicine also expands that notion of putting service before self.

“I love caring for the children of our service members and helping them to be as healthy as they can be. Watching children grow, whether it has been from newborn to toddler, or pre-teen to adolescent, I have a small part in shaping their future, and perhaps our future service men and women. As a pediatrician, I know that I provide peace of mind to the deckplate Sailor and Marine to know that his or her family is well cared for while they are down range, or can provide that patient-centered care if I am downrange myself,” stated Donalty.

As a pediatrician, Donalty helps support the Navy surgeon general priority on operational readiness and core mission of ensuring force medical readiness and medical force readiness by providing family-centric compassion, competence, and care.

“Since my clinical work is with children, my work keeps the service member ready by contributing to family readiness and health,” noted Donalty.

When asked to sum up her experience with Navy Medicine at NMRTC Bremerton in one sentence, Donalty replied, “Every day brings new opportunities to move us closer to zero preventable harm, create an environment of safe and quality care, along where staff feel they are valued team members.”